

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION ACDA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 ACDE-00 NRC-05 SSO-00 NSCE-00
USIE-00 INRE-00 ERDA-05 CIAE-00 H-01 INR-07 IO-13
L-03 NSAE-00 OIC-02 OMB-01 PA-01 PM-04 PRS-01
SP-02 SS-15 TRSE-00 DODE-00 NSC-05 ERDE-00 /088 W
-----301740Z 057282 /46

O R 301643Z MAR 77
FM AMEMBASSY BONN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6982
INFO USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS IMMEDIATE
USDEL MBFR VIENNA IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW IMMEDIATE
USNMR SHAPE
CINC EUR VAIHINGEN

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 BONN 05645

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PARM, NATO, MBFR, GW
SUBJECT: MBFR: TABLING OF NATIONAL MANPOWER DATA

REF: STATE 067040

BEGIN SUMMARY: THE FRG CONTINUES UNWILLING TO TABLE
ITS NATIONAL MANPOWER TOTALS IN VIENNA, FEARING
THAT THE COLLECTIVITY PRINCIPLE WOULD BE JEOPARDIZED.
THE GERMANS THINK THE DATA ISSUE IS AN IMPORTANT
POLITICAL PROBLEM DESERVING SERIOUS DISCUSSION WITHIN
THE ALLIANCE. END SUMMARY

1. ON MARCH 30 AN EMBASSY OFFICER MET WITH FRG ARMS
CONTROL COMMISSIONER RUTH, ACCOMPANIED BY FONOFF MBFR
DIRECTOR RUECKRIEGEL, TO EXPLORE FURTHER RUTH'S
THINKING ABOUT HOW THE ALLIANCE MIGHT PROCEED WITH
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THE DATA DISCUSSION. RUTH REFERRED TO THE POINT
IN THE US PAPER (REFTEL) IN WHICH "...NATO SHOULD
CONSIDER OVERALL DATA OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGY..."
RUTH THOUGHT THIS POINT WAS WELL TAKEN AND THAT THE
ALLIANCE SHOULD PERCEIVE THE DATA QUESTION AS AN
"IMPORTANT POLITICAL PROBLEM." HE ANTICIPATED THAT
BUNDESTAG DEPUTIES WOULD SOON BE ASKING HIM WHERE THE

ALLIANCE SHOULD GO NOW IF THE SOVIETS CONTINUE TO MAINTAIN THERE IS NO LARGE FORCE DISPARITY IN CENTRAL EUROPE.

2. RUTH SAID THE DATA PROBLEM DID NOT CONCERN WHETHER WESTERN MANPOWER FIGURES WERE KNOWN. HE NOTED SUCH FIGURES WERE ON THE PUBLIC RECORD, CITING THE FRG'S "WHITE BOOK" AS AN EXAMPLE. RATHER, RUTH CONTINUED, THE PROBLEM WAS WHETHER SUCH FIGURES COULD BE INTRODUCED INTO THE NEGOTIATION WITHOUT JEOPARDIZING THE COLLECTIVITY PRINCIPLE. RUTH INDICATED THAT ANOTHER ASPECT OF THE PROBLEM POSED BY EASTERN INSISTENCE UPON TABLING OF NATIONAL TOTALS WAS THE QUESTION OF AN EXPLICIT ALLIANCE UNDERSTANDING THAT THERE SHOULD BE NO NATIONAL REDUCTION COMMITMENTS (PARA 1, REFTTEL). RUTH NOTED THIS POINT HAD BEEN ALLUDED TO IN THE CONTEXT OF OPTION III, BUT HAD NEVER BEEN PINNED DOWN SPECIFICALLY.

3. RUTH ALSO INDICATED AN INTEREST IN THE POSSIBILITY OF LOOKING AT THE NUMBER OF MAJOR UNITS AS A POSSIBLE MEANS OF EXPLAINING THE DISCREPANCIES BETWEEN WESTERN ESTIMATES AND EASTERN TABLED FIGURES FOR PACT FORCES. HE WAS LESS ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT BREAKDOWNS BY COUNTRY OF LOCATION BECAUSE IT WOULD LEAD BACK TO NATIONAL TOTALS.

4. RUTH SAID THE FRG WAS WILLING TO CONTRIBUTE TO A DISCUSSION ON THE ABOVE TOPICS. HE THOUGHT THE
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DIALOGUE COULD BE CARRIED ON MULTILATERALLY IN BRUSSELS OR THROUGH CONTINUED BI- AND/OR TRILATERAL CONVERSATIONS. HE SAID THE FRG HAD NO PLANS NOW FOR TABLING A PAPER IN NATO AS A BASIS FOR DISCUSSION.

5. IN CONCLUDING THE CONVERSATION, RUTH SAID HE LOOKED FORWARD TO THE SECRETARY'S VISIT TO BONN TOMORROW AND THE OPPORTUNITY FOR DISCUSSIONS WITH US OFFICIALS FOLLOWING THE MOSCOW TALKS.

6. COMMENT: FRG AWARENESS OF THE KEY SOVIET NEGOTIATING GOAL IN MBFR OF PUTTING A "CAP" ON THE BUNDESWEHR HAS OCCASIONED THE STRONG GERMAN RESISTANCE TO TABLING THEIR NATIONAL MANPOWER FIGURES WHICH, ULTIMATELY, COULD LEAD TO A DE FACTO LIMITATION -- IN THE FORM OF A SUB-CEILING -- ON THE SIZE OF THE BUNDESWEHR. THE GERMANS FEAR THAT EVEN A FIRST, RELATIVELY CAUTIOUS STEP, SUCH AS TABLING NATIONAL FIGURES WITH AN APPROPRIATE DISCLAIMER, WOULD

INEXORABLY PUSH THEM OVER THE SIDE AND DOWN THE
SLIPPERY SLOPE TOWARD A SPECIFIC GERMAN CEILING. OUR
CONVERSATION WITH RUTH TODAY REINFORCED OUR IMPRESSIONS

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THAT THERE IS LITTLE, IF ANY, FLEXIBILITY ON THIS
POINT.

A SOVIET OVERSIGHT -- OR EVEN THE PERCEPTION OF
ONE -- ON THE BUNDESWEHR IS SIMPLY UNACCEPTABLE TO
THIS OR ANY OTHER GERMAN GOVERNMENT. THE CDU/CSU
OPPOSITION, NOW EVEN STRONGER FOLLOWING ITS ROUT OF
THE SPD IN COMMUNAL ELECTIONS IN HESSEN, COULD BE
EXPECTED TO EXPLOIT ANY GOVERNMENT VULNERABILITY ON
THIS POINT TO THE FULLEST. NO SPD/FDP COALITION
IN ITS PROPER SENSES WOULD WISH TO PRESENT THE
OPPOSITION WITH SUCH A GRATUITOUS TARGET OF OPPORTUNITY.
THUS, WE CAN EXPECT THE GERMANS TO CONTINUE TO
DEFEND THE COLLECTIVITY PRINCIPLE TO SAFEGUARD
THEIR VERY REAL INTEREST IN KEEPING CURRENT AND FUTURE

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DEFENSE OPTIONS OPEN.

THIS STILL LEAVES US WITH THE PROBLEM OF WHERE WE GO FROM HERE, PARTICULARLY IN VIEW OF THE SOVIET POSITION THAT APPROXIMATE PARITY ALREADY EXISTS IN CENTRAL EUROPE. THE FRG WOULD STILL LIKE TO PURSUE THE DATA DISCUSSION FROM ANY ANGLE BUT TABLING OF NATIONAL MANPOWER TOTALS. AT THE MOMENT, HOWEVER, IT HAS NO SPECIFIC ALTERNATIVES TO OFFER, ONLY A WILLINGNESS TO ENTER INTO A SERIOUS DISCUSSION WITHIN THE ALLIANCE OF THE ISSUES.
STOESSEL

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